

Public Schools

vs.

Parochial Schools.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS VERSUS PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS.

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[Delivered in Tremont Temple, Boston, before the Evangelical Alliance, Sept. 10, 1888.]

MR. CHAIRMAN, AMERICAN CITIZENS, AND FELLOW PULPITEERS :

Allow me to preface my address with the question which the Hebrews put to their leaders, civil and religious: “Watchman, what of the night?”

This question implies that it is the duty of the Christian pulpit to live for the times and constantly stand upon the public lookout. This implied duty *is* the duty of the Christian pulpit. It should discern the events of today. It should deal with the men of today. It should point out the dangers of today. It should strike at the sins of today. It may valiantly attack Adam for stealing apples from the garden of Eden; it may eloquently denounce Nebuchadnezzar for forgetting and ignoring God, the Ruler of the universe; it may fearlessly criminate the Jewish and Roman nationalities for crucifying the Lord Jesus Christ; but this will not be accepted by God as a substitute for the duty of rebuking the sinning men and ungodly nations and corrupt systems of the nineteenth century. The sins of today, and the sinners of today—these must be made the targets of today. A living Christian pulpit is the pulpit that deals with living duties, and living dangers, and living conflicts, and living issues. It is a pulpit whose voice is heard in all of the departments of life.

This conception of the pulpit is what leads me as a pulpiteer to take up the topic of the hour—Our Public Schools. There is a question in the air concerning these. It is the old question—“Watchman, what of the night?” In answering the question we are compelled to report: “A cloud the size of a man’s hand is on the horizon of the public schools of the American republic.” Let patriots arise and look at it, and decide for themselves as to its character. Is it portentous of a storm that shall fill the national heavens from horizon to horizon, and from whose black bosom fire-bolts shall

leap to shatter our cherished educational system? Or is the cloud-like thing merely a few flecks of floating vapor that will soon melt out of sight? If a storm is coming we must at once look to our puritanical foundations, and rope down our schools to the rocks of American ideas, as the United States signal station on the summit of Mount Washington is roped to the everlasting granite of God's hill. If the cloud be merely pieces of broken and scattered vapor, mere puffs of mist from European marsh lands which have floated over the ocean and which, because of their long journey, have strength to float no longer, then may we rest unconcernedly and rejoice anew in the perpetuity of our boasted free schools.

You may decide differently, but to my eyes the cloud looks storm-like. But let us drop all figure and speak plainly. The school question is upon us and must be discussed; it will not down; it is the living issue of the hour. I do not need to give the origin of the controversy as it prevails in our own community, for this is known to all. A priest started it. It was a torch in his hand that kindled the fire which now blazes beyond his control. Faneuil hall has been heard from; and the press of the city has poured forth column after column on the question, pro and con. It is hard to move the Boston community; but the Boston community has been moved. It has been moved, too, by a very little thing—the letter of a solitary priest. This is significant. It is significant of this fact: He who touches the common school system of the republic touches the apple of the nation's eye. It is significant of the loyalty of Americans to American institutions.

But let me tell you at this point what is not and what is the purpose of my address this morning. It is not my purpose to take up the school question in its local aspects; it is not my purpose to discuss the merits of the teacher whom the priest tried to strike down; a man with the ten years' record which he has may congratulate himself that he is Mr. Travis and not Mr. Metcalf. It is not my purpose to frame an argument on behalf of the text-book ejected from the schools: it also has a ten years' record, and its author may congratulate himself that he gives as correct an idea of the facts of history as its judges give. I drop all that is local. It is my purpose to speak upon these two points:

I. It is the present duty of American patriots to recognize the

existence of the enemy of our common schools, and to look up its record and the policy which it is working out.

II. It is the present duty of American patriots to consider the question: "How shall this enemy be met?"

A great point will be gained when the American republic shall come to see its enemy as it is, and to understand thoroughly its ultimate and objective point.

Our great enemy is Roman Catholicism. This is a system thoroughly organized, and, if we are to take it at its own word, it is root and branch, in toto, anti-American. It is a church. But it is more than a church; it is a state, and a state that claims universal authority, the first allegiance of mankind. If you would see the pretensions of this system, read Starr King's lecture on Hildebrand. Hildebrand was one of the greatest brains Romanism ever produced, and he did more than any man to inspire the ism with large pretensions and to shape it into its present form. Hildebrand, occupying the papal chair, claimed that all nations without exception were his footstool. Whether the nations heeded him or not, he issued his orders all the same, and sent forth his edicts deposing and enthroning kings. He was like the insane man who imagined he was a general and who straightened himself up to his full height and gave the command, "Attention, universe; by kingdoms wheel!" Hildebrand, in issuing his papal edicts, was accustoming the world and his church to big things; and it is wonderful how near to his pompous ideal the system which he championed came.

It is a bold charge to bring against Romanism that it is anti-American, root and branch. But the charge is one that is picked up from documents which come to us from the Vatican itself. The Roman pontiff is responsible for the charge. In his encyclical, which is a document that speaks *ex cathedra*, he denounces every fundamental principle of our republic, and calls them all heresies. Liberty of the press and liberty of speech, these are American principles; but in his encyclical the Roman See writes: "I anathematize all who maintain the liberty of the press and all advocates of the liberty of speech, which is the liberty of perdition." Free schools, independent of all church interference, are American ideas, corner-stones of the republic. The American constitution puts the key of knowledge into the hands of the people. In his encyclical the Roman See declares, Article 45: "The Romish church has a

right to interfere in the discipline of public schools, and in the arrangement of the studies of public schools, and in the choice of the teachers of these schools." And again, in Article 47: "Public schools open to all children, for the education of the young, should be under the control of the Romish church, and should not be subject to the civil power, nor made to conform to the opinions of the age." Liberty of conscience is another fundamental principle of the republic's creed and life. In his encyclical the Roman See writes: "The absurd and erroneous doctrines, or ravings, in defence of liberty of conscience, are a most pestilential error, a pest of all others most to be dreaded in the state." "I anathematize those who assert the liberty of conscience and of religious worship and all such as maintain that the church may not employ force." This creed of the pontiff is put before every priest and bishop for subscription, and they accept it and swear allegiance to the pontiff. The cardinal swears that he will seek to restore the temporal power of the pope. One sentence in his oath is: "I will seek out and oppose and persecute and fight heretics and schismatics against our lord the pope." My fellow-countrymen, the American republic and the Romish system stand for and incorporate antipodal and antagonistic principles and purposes, and that according to the authoritative, *ex cathedra* declaration of Rome itself. My Roman Catholic friend, you say you are as good an American as I am, and as loyal to American institutions, as they are, as I am. If so, then you are not a good Romanist. If you claim to be a good American and a good Romanist in one, then there is a question of veracity between you and the pontiff. The pontiff has the better of you. The pontiff is supreme; he is infallible; you are not.

With such a creed, issuing from headquarters, binding the citizenship of Rome, what wonder is it that we have such bitter words as these, which we find printed in *The Freeman's Journal*, New York: "Let the public school go where it came from—the devil." And such words as these, uttered by Mgr. Capel, a leading light of the church: "The time is not far away when Roman Catholics in the republic, at the order of the pope, will refuse to pay a school tax, and will send bullets to the breasts of the government agents."

This system, presented to you in the form of its own words, is the system which furnishes the men who are making the attack upon our public schools. It was an emissary of this system who wrote

that letter to the Boston school board and made that attack upon one of our American teachers. When the sworn devotee of a foreign potentate strikes an American citizen in the discharge of his duty, I mean to ally myself for all I am worth with my fellow countryman.

So much for the personnel of the foe of our schools. What is the foe doing? That is the next question. The answer is easy. The foe is introducing substitutes for the schools as they now are. It is commanding the children who are in the schools to leave them; it is threatening the parents; it is depleting the schools so far as it is able. It is claimed by Romanists that they have the right to do this, and this right is generally conceded. It is said the Roman church has its rights in this land. It is said that it owns its children. Now I am not prepared to deny this, but still there is a question not yet settled in my mind, and it is this: Does the church own the children? The republic is supreme; the republic has its rights. The children are first of all born into the republic. It is a fair question: The republic or the church, which? The state has certainly a right to see to it that its born citizens shall be instructed as to the true nature and claims of the state, and the duties which citizens owe the state. It certainly has the right to see that the mind of its born citizens shall not be poisoned against it. In things that pertain to itself and its own welfare, the state is supreme. That is an axiom. With this axiom before me I raise the question: Has the Romish church, or any other church, the right to educate its children, which are just as much the children of the state as of the church, into allegiance to another earthly power, a foreign potentate? Has not the republic the right to bring its children under its own tuition long enough to indoctrinate them in the duties of citizenship, and in the principles of loyalty? Let American patriots ponder this question and carefully reply. If the nation allowed every ism to abstract its children from its educational jurisdiction and put them into opposing schools, its national personality would soon become like the image of Nebuchadnezzar, with its golden head, and silver breast, and iron thighs, and feet of clay. Its own schools would furnish the head of gold; but what would be the value of the head of gold so long as the other parts of the body politic were only silver, and iron, and clay? The first stone of adversity would break the nation into fragments.

I never think of the parochial schools, the substitutes and agencies

which Rome uses to damage our educational system, without mentally putting questions to my fellow citizens of the Roman faith. I propound to them questions like these: We have gotten along together in the past under our present institutions and we have reached our present attainments by means of them. Now, why should the future be different from the past? As you have inaugurated separation, it remains with you to satisfactorily answer the question. As yet you have given no answer that will stand before the bar of patriotic reason for the fraction of a second. Do you urge "The pontiff commands it"? That is no answer in America. That would not even be considered a good answer in the Rome of Victor Emanuel and of Garibaldi, to say nothing of Boston with its cradle of liberty and its monuments of the Pilgrim fathers. Have you considered the inevitable results of your movement? You are breeding an alienation from your fellow countrymen which must necessarily react to your detriment. You are carrying animosity and bitterness back to the cradle, and thus rooting it indelibly in the nature of your followers. Do you not know that bitterness produces bitterness? As you feel toward your fellow citizens they will feel toward you, and as you treat them they will treat you. Remember you only number, at most, one-eighth of the population of the republic. Can you meet seven-eighths of the country at the ballot box? For, be assured, this alienation and separation will meet you at the ballot box. Your political influence today consists in this fact, that because you vote solidly you hold the balance of power between the two contending political parties of the nation. But in the future the present political parties will have passed away and there will be no balance of power. In the future it will simply be America versus Rome at the ballot box. Your course is fanaticism, and fanaticism always begets fanaticism.

My fellowmen, this is the lesson formulated by history and experience. This, even, is the story of the past as Catholicism has clashed with Protestantism. I remember a story illustrative of this which I have carried from childhood. It is taken from the annals of my Scottish fore-fathers. In Scotland Romanists hated dissenters, and as a result dissenters hated Romanists. The story is told of a Scotch Covenanter minister. He grew to so dislike and hate Romanism that in every sermon he felt that he was disloyal to God and country if he did not, to use his own words, "break a lance with

the pope." It was pope in the exordium of the sermon ; it was pope in the body of the sermon ; and it was pope in the peroration of the sermon. Thus it was fifty-two Sabbaths every year. His preaching grew monotonous to the people, and they carried a complaint to the presbytery. The presbytery felt that the complaint was an exaggeration. As the complaint was, "No matter what text he may take the sermon is popery," the presbytery said they would give him a text and assemble in the church and hear him preach a sermon. They selected a text as far as possible from his accustomed line of thought. They gave him these three words from the book of Genesis as a text, the names of three men, viz : Adam, Seth, Enos. The day of the preaching came, and it was a memorable day. The presbytery was there, and so was the congregation, and so was the minister. Solemnly he took his place in the pulpit and announced his text : Adam, Seth, Enos. His very first sentence was : "My dear brethren, these men lived in a day when there was no pope nor popery and consequently they had not to contend against the gigantic evils which curse our age, viz : 1st, the usurpation of the authority of Jesus by a fallible man ; 2d, the denial of the rights of conscience to the people by a great system of iniquity." The story has its amusing side ; it may even be fiction, but it carries a great fact in it : this fact, that Romanism will receive from the world just what it gives to the world. If it gives ostracism and hatred and blows, then it will receive ostracism and hatred and blows. But I have dwelt long enough with my first point. I want to deal with my second point.

It is the present duty of American patriots to consider the question, How shall we meet this enemy ?

This question needs to be pushed. It does so because of the very characteristics of the American public. Matthew Arnold gives it as a result of his knowledge of us, that Americans are characterized by a certain nonchalance concerning danger and an optimism of expectation that all is coming out well. Some are very careless and some very liberal, and some are "fiercely moderate" ; some would let the republic lose itself in the mush of magnanimity. Quiet men are afraid of the agitation and tumult of conflict. Kindly men dislike the bitterness which is provoked by discussion, and timid men are afraid to avow their faith in their principles when this may imperil the peace of the land. I have no sympathy with a single one

of these classes. Americans, whatever part you act, do not act the part of cowards. Let no one cry peace when there is no peace. Let no one be ashamed of his Protestantism. There is no ism in the world that can make a nation so great; it has made us what we are; it has made England what it is. R. W. Dale, a contemporary of Gladstone and Bright, and a man whose voice is heard in English politics as well as in the English pulpit, in his "Protestantism: Its Ultimate Principle," writes: "The true greatness of the English nation began with its controversy with Rome. It was during that protracted struggle that the genius of our ancestors revealed itself for the first time in all its splendors, and that the English nation gave to Europe the first decisive proof of its heroic temper. Three periods in English history are ever memorable—the reign of Elizabeth, the Commonwealth, the Revolution of 1688—and in every one of these the fiery hatred of the English for Romanism, which was drunk with the blood of the saints, was at a white heat. Our Protestantism has become one of the chief bonds of our national unity. The achievements of our ancestors in the Protestant cause have been cherished among our most glorious traditions. Shakespeare is Protestant through and through. Milton was not only a Protestant, but a Puritan. The sovereigns whose names are on the lips of the common people, and whose reigns we regard with the greatest pride—Elizabeth, Cromwell, William III—are all identified with the triumphs of Protestantism. If England ceases to be Protestant, the change must affect the chief monuments of English literature, and must break up all English national traditions." Such words are refreshing now that a conflict between Protestantism and Romanism has been inaugurated in our land by Rome. They teach us that if we are true our future greatness is just beginning.

But let us keep to the question of the hour—What can we do?

1. In the first place we can plainly tell Rome that we will earnestly and unceasingly resist all her efforts to Romanize our republic.

Let us begin at once to carry out our declaration. The Christian Union of New York rightly instructs us here; it sends these words through the nation: "The Roman Catholic church is consistent, patient, wise, but absolutely uncompromising. The time to resist her demand to control the education of the young is when she makes the most seemly modest request to control the education of a single

school-room, a single scholar, a single teacher, in the schools established and maintained by the state."

Again the question, What can we do?

2. Let us tell Rome that we know her as an educator, for friends in Europe have told us all about her. We have the convictions and testimony of some of the strongest minds of the old world. They tell us that "Romanism is chiefly responsible for German and French infidelity. For when a mind to which thought and free inquiry have been forbidden as a crime attains its intellectual majority, the largeness of liberty is not enough; it reacts into license and excess. Scepticism and infidelity are the legitimate children of unreasoning and superstitious credulity; they are the grand-children of Rome. Apostate Catholics are swelling our most dangerous classes." Lafayette said when here—Lafayette himself was a Romanist—"If the liberties of the American people are ever destroyed they will fall by the hands of the Roman clergy."

Tyndall laughed at Rome as an educator in science. In reply to the critic of his Belfast address he gives this illustration: "When Halley's comet appeared in 1456 it was regarded as a harbinger of God's vengeance. By order of the pope all the church-bells in Europe were rung to scare the monster away. According to the laws of nature of course the comet passed away from sight, and the saints were made to believe that the church had gained another victory in the heavens." Tyndall points to this as a specimen of Rome's science.

We have with us the words of Victor Hugo. They are words of fire and burning logic; they run thus: "Ah, we know you; we know the clerical party; it is an old party. This it is which has found for the truth those two marvelous supporters, ignorance and error. This it is which forbids science and genius to go beyond the Missal and which wishes to cloister thought. Every step which the intelligence of Europe has taken has been in spite of it. This it is which persecuted Harvey for having proved the circulation of the blood. In the name of Jesus it shut up Galileo. In the name of St. Paul it imprisoned Christopher Columbus. To discover a law of the heaven was an impiety; to find a world was a heresy. This it is which anathematized Pascal in the name of religion, Montaigne in the name of morality. You claim the liberty of teaching. Stop. Be sincere. Let us understand the

liberty you claim. It is the liberty of not teaching. You wish us to give you the people to instruct. Very well. Let us see your pupils. What have you done for Italy? I shall tell you. Italy, which taught mankind to read, now knows not how to read." Every word uttered by Victor Hugo is keen and true; and I have only given you the smallest part of his eloquent philippic, formed out of the facts of history.

Again the question, what can we do?

3. We can receive and protect converts from Rome and we can show our sympathy for those struggling toward light.

Let us make it a safe thing for any one to leave an order of Rome, openly and fearlessly. Let us make it a safe thing for a man to act according to his own conscience within the pale of Rome, so far as that is possible. R. W. Dale writes on this point: "The course a civil government should follow is plain. Whenever, and under whatever pretext, men invade each other's civil rights and disturb the peace of the state, the authority of the state should interfere. If the priest at the altar provokes resistance to the civil authority the sanctity of the altar should not shelter him. I would try the priest before the common tribunals, and I would punish him just as severely as I would punish any other man for using the same language in any other place. If the priest conspires against the state I would not let his priestly character protect him against the penalties inflicted upon other men for conspiracy. If, under the name of excommunication, a priest utters a public slander on the character of any citizen, let the priest be tried for slander and let him be punished for it."

What shall we do?

4. Let us stand by the schools as they now are. Some say, Let us secularize them; let us throw out God and his book. No, we do not want God for an enemy. Religion is now reduced to the smallest respectable minimum in the schools. I have no more respect for atheism than I have for Romanism. Of the two isms I choose neither. No. Leave the schools as the fathers founded them. Already the Romanists are crying out against the schools as godless schools. To secularize the school is only to play into their hands and leave thousands of unchurched children without a conviction of their responsibility to God. There must be enough of truth and of morality and of God in our schools to create in every pupil a con-

science and a wholesome respect for the divine attribute of justice. Let us stand by the schools as they now are. Let us set forth their advantages. They create a desire for knowledge. They teach the equality of all American citizens. In them the rich and the poor stand upon the same level. They unify the coming citizens of the nation. They exalt the brotherhood of man, and create sympathy between heart and heart.

Let us beware of all religious faiths that separate men; let us honor only those religions that draw men together, and that inspire good will and teach patience and gentleness and forbearance.

What shall we do? I have only one answer more. It is this:

5. Trust the God of nations and preach the gospel of Jesus Christ.

There is a defence for the nation, and a strong defence. We have a defence in human nature itself. The defence for the republic against the power of the papacy does not lie with the politician, nor with ecclesiastical courts, nor even with the controversialist; it lies in the inherent right which God has given to every intelligent creature to listen to God for himself, to think for himself and to be his own priest when he deals with truth and with duty and with God. It is every man's privilege to deal with God first hand. Bye and bye the whole world is bound to know this. Channing says, in a letter which he writes to the editor of *Western Messenger*, Louisville, Kentucky: "The great foe of the Romish church is not the theologian. He might be imprisoned, chained, burned. It is human nature waking up to a consciousness of its powers, catching a glimpse of the perfection for which it was made, beginning to respect itself, thirsting for free action and development, learning through a deep consciousness that there is something diviner than forms or churches or creeds, recognizing in Jesus Christ its own celestial model, and claiming kindred with all who have caught any portion of his spiritual life and disinterested love; here, here is the great enemy of Catholicism."

We have a defence in God. Romanism has been in the world for centuries, yet look how grandly the world has moved on notwithstanding. God is with the truth and not with error. Though we see

"Right forever on the scaffold, wrong forever on the throne;
Yet that scaffold sways the future, and within the dim unknown
Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above his own."

I believe that God has a millstone for the system of Romanism, and large as Romanism is the millstone is larger. It will some day sink it into depths that know no resurrection. I believe that this is the teaching of the Apocalypse of John. It carries in it the doom of every false system. Amid the awful predictions with which the canon of revelation closes, not a single ray of scripture hope can be found to gild the destiny of papal Rome. A dense unbroken cloud of portentous judgment lowers upon its horizon. No other light meets the eye of the observer than the glare of an awful thunderbolt, and no other sound breaks upon the ear than the glad shout of the universe which tells of eternal overthrow. This is the shout : "Babylon the great has fallen, has fallen to rise no more." But all this is with God ; we have to do with something else. We have to deal with the proclamation of the gospel. We have to offer Christ to the Romanist. It is ours to tell him that there is no salvation for his religious system, but there is salvation for him. We should distinguish between the ism and the man. We are to think of the souls held in thralldom. We are to pray that coming Luthers may arise even in Rome itself and inaugurate new and wider reformations. Luthers in the future are just as possible as were Luthers in the past. There are other single verses in the Bible which carry whole reformations in them, besides the text, "The just shall live by faith." We must pray to God for some reformer who will put his whole personality and faith into these texts and make them live and make them march to worldwide victory. We must pray for McCall missions and McAuley missions in our cities, for New England Evangelistic associations and American Reformation societies. Fill the atmosphere of America full of the gospel of Christ, and it will change the character and life and complexion of every system in the land. The gospel of Christ, unmixed and pure, is the only hope of our republic. The republic was inaugurated by the covenant of the Mayflower and it must continue to have a future into which Plymouth Rock can be built unhewn. When we have done all that is in our power to do for the filling of our nation with the pure truth and keeping it true to its origin, we can commit ourselves and our children and our country to the future without a tremor of doubt or fear. With radiant faces we can turn to it and address it in the well-known and familiar words of our beloved poet :

* * * "Sail on, O ship of State !
Sail on, O Union, strong and great !
Humanity, with all its fears,
With all its hopes of future years,
Is hanging breathless on thy fate !
We know what master laid thy keel,
What workmen wrought thy ribs of steel,
Who made each mast and sail and rope,
What anvils rang, what hammers beat,
In what a forge and what a heat
Were shaped the anchors of thy hope !
Fear not each sudden sound and shock,
'Tis but the wave, and not the rock ;
'Tis but the flapping of the sail,
And not a rent made by the gale !
In spite of rock and tempest's roar,
In spite of false lights on the shore,
Sail on, nor fear to breast the sea !
Our hearts, our hopes, our prayers, our tears,
Our faith triumphant o'er our fears,
Are all with thee, are all with thee !"

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP THE AMERICAN REFORMATION ALONG ?

Many earnest Christian people, who realize the dangers menacing our country, are writing us, heartily commending us for the moral courage shown in the utterances of "The American," and asking us what they can do to help along the cause of reformation?

We reply:—

1. If you have not yet subscribed for "The American," do so at once.
2. Ask your neighbor to take it. Speak a good word for it everywhere.
3. Put us in possession of any interesting facts that will help the cause.
4. Protestant people need light. Subscribe for enough extra copies of "The American" that we may mail from this office a copy to every Protestant family in your town or ward.
5. Romanists themselves need light. Subscribe for enough extra copies that we may mail sample issues to every Romanist family in your place.
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Can you not help us by subscribing for 100 or more copies to be mailed one week or one year, to people needing the printed word?

We feel that this is God's work, and that he is calling upon every Caleb and Joshua to go up and possess the land in His name.

Reader, if you have a courageous heart, and a desire to put the Lord's money where it will do the most good in arousing a national, patriotic and reform sentiment, send us your commands, and we will mail "The American" in any direction you may suggest.

We hope some good friend will pay for 5000 copies to be mailed to the barber shops of our land. Let "The American" crowd out the Police News. Every issue of "The American" is filled with meaty articles in great variety, so that every nature will find in it something to interest and fix the thought.

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